

LIZZIE HAGNY, ADMINISTRATRIX.

MAY 24, 1898.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. McEWAN, from the Committee on Claims, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany S. 2678.]

The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2678) for the relief of Lizzie Hagny, as administratrix of the estate of Frank B. Smith, deceased, have carefully considered the same and respectfully submit the following report:

The bill authorizes and directs the Secretary of the Treasury to pay, out of any moneys in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to Lizzie Hagny as administratrix of the estate of Frank B. Smith, deceased, the sum of \$1,237.52, being the amount expended by said Frank B. Smith for clerk hire in excess of the allowance during his incumbency as postmaster at Wichita, Kans., from October 1, 1886, to June 30, 1887.

The committee find that Frank B. Smith submitted vouchers to the Department for clerk hire from October 1, 1886, to June 30, 1887, as follows:

October 1 to December 31, 1886.....	\$1,567.26
January 1 to March 31, 1887.....	1,595.35
April 1 to June 30, 1887.....	1,832.41
Total.....	4,995.02

The amount allowed during the period was—

October 1 to December 31, 1886.....	\$650.00
January 1 to March 31, 1887.....	1,332.50
April 1 to June 30, 1887.....	1,775.00
Total.....	3,757.50

The amount expended, as shown by vouchers on file, in excess of amount allowed was \$1,237.52.

Mr. Smith took charge of the post-office at Wichita, Kans., October 1, 1886. The population of Wichita had begun to increase at an extraordinary rate about this time, and the business of the post-office increased and continued to increase to an enormous extent during the first year of the incumbency of the said Frank B. Smith.

The city was in the midst of what is called a "boom" of extraordinary proportions. Thousands of people from all parts of the country were flocking to the city. The streets and hotels were filled with strangers and proposed settlers month after month during this time.

The demands upon the post-office officials were extraordinary, and were far beyond the capacity of the regular force allowed to the office.

It was not unusual to see hundreds of people in line, reaching not only out of the office, but far down the street, waiting for their turn at the delivery windows to obtain their mail.

The amount of mail received and distributed during this period was beyond all precedent, both on account of the increase in the legitimate population and the extraordinary influx of strangers at this time.

During this period Mr. Smith was not only at work night and day, and all his clerical force allowed by the Department, but also a considerable clerical force employed by Mr. Smith in excess of what the Department paid for. This state of affairs continued for a considerable period of time, and finally the matter was presented to the Department. A special agent was sent there, and an allowance was finally made to cover future necessities, but no provision was made for reimbursement for the large outlay which Mr. Smith was compelled to make prior to the time the special agent made his investigation. This bill is for reimbursement for that outlay.

The committee has on file the following communication from the First Assistant Postmaster-General, to whom this bill was referred for recommendation in the Fifty-fourth Congress:

Hon. E. O. WOLCOTT,

Chairman of Committee on Post-Offices and Post-Roads, United States Senate.

SIR: Referring to Senate bill No. 3084, as above described, I have the honor to advise you that from an examination of the records of this Department it would appear that the claim of the estate of the late Frank B. Smith for reimbursement in the sum of \$1,237.52, expended by him in excess of regularly authorized clerk hire allowance during his incumbency as postmaster at Wichita, Kans., from October 1, 1886, to June 30, 1887, is a meritorious one, and the same is hereby approved.

A report similar to this was made on H. R. bill 8252, under date of April 24, 1896.

Very respectfully,

F. H. JONES,

First Assistant Postmaster-General.

Believing that this is a meritorious bill, the committee recommend that it be passed without amendment.